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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 588
By Goins

A RESOLUTION To honor the memory of legendary guitarist,
Chet Atkins.

WHEREAS, The members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Chet Atkins; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Atkins was a talented musician and a positive force in the Country Music industry for many years; his accomplishments as a guitarist and as an executive with RCA Records will forever hold a place in the history of modern music; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable artist recorded more than seventy-five albums of guitar instrumentals and played on hundreds of hit records, including Elvis Presley's "Heartbreak Hotel," Hank William Sr.'s "Your Cheatin' Heart" and "Jambalaya," and The Everly Brothers "Wake up Little Susie"; and

WHEREAS, Chester Burton Atkins was born June 20, 1924 on a farm in Union County; in his early days of playing, he was greatly inspired by Merle Travis; his older brother, Jim Atkins, also played the guitar and eventually performed with Les Paul; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Atkins' first professional job was as a fiddler on WNOX in Knoxville, playing for singer, Bill Carlisle, and he subsequently worked at radio stations all over the country; and

WHEREAS, During the 1940s, he toured extensively with a variety of artists, including, Red Foley, The Carter Family, and Kitty Wells; in the 1950s, he was hired by RCA Executive Steve Sholes as a house guitarist for RCA recording sessions; and

WHEREAS, Chet Atkins began his distinguished executive career with RCA Records in 1957; for nearly two decades, he played a significant role in the careers of many notable musicians, including Roy Orbison, Jim Reeves, Charley Pride, Dolly Parton, Jerry Reed, Waylon Jennings, and Eddy Arnold; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Atkins was a devoted family man and will be greatly missed by his wife of more than fifty years, Leona Johnson Atkins, and his daughter, Merle Atkins; and

WHEREAS, His imprint on the music industry will indelibly remain, as his talent, artistry, and enthusiasm has touched the lives of countless fellow performers and fans; and

WHEREAS, Joe Galante, Chairman of the RCA Label Group in Nashville, has said, "It's impossible to capsule his life due to the profound impact he's had as a wonderful human being and incredible member of our industry. His artistry and his influence as an industry leader have impacted so many. There is no way to replace him nor what he has meant to music and our Nashville community"; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor the memory of Chet Atkins, recognizing his lasting impact on music of all genres, commend his character and spirit, and express our appreciation for his considerable contributions to the rich musical history of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Atkins.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.